



# FLASHPOINT

## The Lynchburg Fire & EMS Official Newsletter

### Chief's Corner Personal Responsibility

I am not going to preach. Well, maybe just a little. After all, we get some of our best advice from preachers. People who, because of their insight, offer us opportunities to reflect. It is in the spirit of reflection that I offer the following words.

While attending the National Fire Academy this month, I had occasion to stop by the Firefighter Memorial and reflect on the great sacrifices of our nation's firefighters. As I stood there, it was hard not to look at the names and wonder how so many people died. More specifically, I wonder about their fire chiefs and how they managed in the aftermath of such tragic events.

If you ponder these types of things, as I am sure the fire chiefs of these men and women did, you can't help but wonder if they asked themselves, "was there something else I could have done to prevent the situation?" Regretfully, I imagine some of them did have to accept at least some responsibility, whether it was not being proactive in causing a change in behavior, or the fact that they looked the other way and didn't confront difficult issues.

While visiting the National Fire Protection Association's website, I viewed statistics that refreshed my memory on how our fellow brothers and sisters are losing their lives. Quite frankly, I was not surprised by the information; however, (and more importantly) I viewed it from a different frame of reference now that I am a chief.

What I found, is that the leading cause of firefighter fatalities in this country is heart attack. Even more disturbing than this fact, is that the statistics reveal almost as many of us die responding to and returning from

calls as can be attributed to fireground deaths. How can it be possible that we lose so many people responding to calls where we have almost complete control, compared to firefighting operations where we have very little control? Don't we have control in most cases of our apparatus? For that matter, don't we in most cases have control over our hearts and their condition?

I have got to say that at this point I am doing some reflecting. We are confronted with situations in which we have control and yet we seem to attribute these losses as some sort of industry anomaly. Almost as if the deaths are supposed to happen.

Now before I go on and you jump up and say "stop preaching," let me put this into perspective. If you look back over the years, with the exception of 2001, we've lost about 100 firefighters per year. This, despite the fact we have hundreds of thousands of firefighters that respond annually to thousands of fires.

You see, it is not the number of deaths that disturbs me as much as who is ultimately responsible for their occurrence. It is evident to me that in the example of apparatus accidents and the physical condition of our hearts, we are the people with the most control. We alone have the ability to monitor the speed of our apparatus and adjust driving techniques based on prevailing conditions. More importantly, we have control over our own fitness. When all is said and done, we have to accept responsibility for our personal actions and lifestyle. More than anything, accepting personal responsibility is how we will reduce these numbers and the events to which they are attributed.

In the Police/Fire Leadership Class we discussed change management and

the three types of change. One type of change is reactive change, where you change something because of a situation that has or is occurring. This type of change is called "expected change." The second type of change is "respected change" and it occurs where something is changed in order to be proactive. The third type of change is "visionary change" and is generally disrespected because it is outside of conventional thinking and in effect before its time. I am hoping that we as a department can institute a little respected (proactive) change with regard to these statistics.

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## Operation Smoke Detector Update

Operation Smoke Detector (OSD) will officially kick off on June 1, 2002. The desired outcome of the project is to place a working smoke detector in every home in Lynchburg by October 2002. This is a tremendous undertaking and one that will not be successful without the support of our members and the community.

On Saturday, May 18th, the OSD Advisory Committee members met to "test" the program by going door-to-door to test and install smoke detectors. In addition, fundraising and recruitment efforts are in full swing. Now that the committee has completed the planning and testing phase, it is time to put things in motion! The project is expected to slowly build momentum and then sustain that momentum through the summer. As a result, you may not even see a volunteer until July or August.

As OSD volunteers begin arriving at the stations to pick up their supplies and help us prevent future loss of lives and property, please be mindful that for many of these folks this will be their first contact with our department. This presents us with the opportunity to create a positive impression with the public. Even though I know that all of our people are courteous and professional, I also realize that we are human and have bad days. With that being said, it is my hope that you will take the opportunity to maximize these contacts and leave our customers with great impressions of our department and its personnel.

*Chief Martinette*



## Lynchburg Progressive Firefighters Association Partners with R.S. Payne Academic Tutorial Academy

The Lynchburg Progressive Firefighters Association (L.P.F.A.) created a partnership with the R.S. Payne Academic Tutorial Academy to teach children about fire and life safety skills and also to provide them with positive role models. Members of the L.P.F.A. have spent many off-duty hours playing fire and life safety games with the children and showing them safety videos.

The R.S. Payne Academic Tutorial Academy is comprised of 65 first through fifth grade students. Based on classroom testing and performance, teachers selected students that they felt would most benefit from participating in this program.

The program began in October 2001 and ended May 2002. Kids attended 50 minute programs presented by the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Parks and Recreation and Drumming On the Edge of Leadership. Assistant Principal Kim Anderson, Program Coordinator, was very pleased to have representatives from the L.P.F.A and the Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department as mentors for this program.

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, Eugene Penick, dressed as Smoky the Bear, made a surprise appearance at the Awards Ceremony. The children were excited to receive their awards from Smoky. This made a favorable impression on all who attended. Additionally, this will give the kids who did not get an award this year an incentive to work harder to obtain an award next year.

Special thanks to the following people for helping to make this program successful: Thomas Goode, Quincy Scott, Michael Thomas, Darryl Dubose, Steve Jackson, Eugene Penick, Robert Lipscomb, Engine 2-B Shift, Layne Terrell, and Tom Sheppard.

Ronnie E. Lewis, Jr.  
President of L.P.F.A



## Nominations Sought



The Awards Selection Committee is seeking nominations to recognize the service and dedication of department members and also for citizens who have contributed to the services that we provide.

Although the deadline for nominations is September 1<sup>st</sup>, the committee requests that nominations be submitted as early as possible, particularly if the person is being recognized for performance of a specific act or involvement at an incident. This allows witnesses to recollect the events easier than if the nomination is delayed by several months. A complete description of the award categories is available on the Intranet (Fire Department's On-line Policy System).

This year's ceremony will be held on October 20<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Mark your calendars now!





## Safety Corner

### Fire Escape at Miller Park Station

U.S. firefighters spend considerable time living and working in fire stations. Like residential and commercial structures everywhere, fire stations are also susceptible to the dangers of fire.

Between 1996 and 1998, approximately 150 fires occurred in fire stations annually. Although these fires represent a minuscule number of the total fires in the United States, they still cause approximately \$1.6 million in property loss annually, not including the cost of replacing or repairing damaged equipment and apparatus.

Further, those fire departments affected by fire must find ways to rebuild facilities and replace equipment/apparatus while maintaining adequate levels of fire protection for their communities.



On July 18, 1986, the Miller Park Station was struck by lightning. The resulting fire burned the roof of the station tower. All stations, with

the exception of Miller Park, have multiple exits from station living quarters. Until recently, Miller Park Station had only one staircase as a means of escape. If a fire had started on the apparatus floor, firefighters would have been hard pressed to find a way out of the building.

Metal fire ladders were provided as a means of escape from the bedrooms prior to the installation of a new fire escape. The construction and installation of this fire escape is now complete. Thanks to all who were involved in this long overdue project to help keep our firefighters safe.

*Rick*

## For Kid's Sake Safety Day

The Fire Department was one of many participants in this year's annual "For Kid's Sake Safety Day," which was held on May 4<sup>th</sup> at River Ridge Mall.

Members of the Fire & EMS Department's Bike Team were on hand to provide bike safety tips for both kids and adults. They also properly fitted bike helmets for children.



This event, sponsored by area law enforcement and fire departments, provides a variety of information on topics such as alcohol and substance abuse, bike, firearm, and internet safety.

## Chief's Corner, Cont.

Over the next several months we will be working to establish fitness and health standards for the department and our members. We will be putting forth some initiatives to help our employees maintain/improve their health and wellness over the course of their careers. These initiatives will not happen overnight, nor will they change our lives overnight. However, they will demonstrate that our department cares about its employees and is committed to their long-term health.

As far as driving is concerned, I am asking for each of you to continually demonstrate personal responsibility with regard to apparatus operation by continually monitoring driving and response speeds. If you are an officer in this department, I expect you to already be doing this. Ultimately, I want all of us to arrive on the scene and provide the great service we have come to be known for.

In conclusion, I am asking each of you to reflect on how you can reduce these dreadful statistics. At the very least, let's take stock in the ones we can be personally accountable for. Stay Safe.

*Bunchley*

## Burn Camp



Even when away from the services they provide each day, firefighters continue to make a difference in the community. One way that Virginia's professional firefighters are reaching out is through the Central Virginia Burn Camp.

Established in March 1994 by the Charlottesville Professional Fire Fighters Association, the Central Virginia Burn Camp provides a fun, safe, and exciting summer camp for young burn survivors. The Camp is beginning its eighth year and, since its inception, firefighters from across the state have assisted to make the Central Virginia Burn Camp a success.

This residential camp is designed to meet the social, physical, and psychological needs of young burn victims while providing an environment that stimulates their curiosity, leading to the exploration of issues with other burned children. It also allows firefighters the opportunity to share experiences with these unique children, most of whom, much like a firefighter, possess a first-hand understanding of fire and its devastating effects.

The camp is free to children between the ages of 7 and 17, and is staffed by nurses, firefighters, physical and occupational therapists, and other volunteers.

This year Lynchburg firefighters are joining in the effort to support this camp. In partnership with the Central Virginia Fire Fighters, Local 1146 will host a cookout for the campers and counselors on June 20<sup>th</sup> prior to the Fire/EMS Appreciation Night at the Lynchburg Hillcats baseball game. The campers will attend the baseball game, taking the field with the Hillcats during the singing of the National Anthem and serving as bat boys/girls during the game.

The Burn Camp will also host an open house on June 19<sup>th</sup> in Charlottesville. Firefighters are invited to visit the camp to see first-hand what goes on. Anyone interested in attending should RSVP to Jason Campbell at Station 6 by June 14<sup>th</sup>.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Community Life & Safety Day

Date: June 1, 2002  
 Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
 Place: Hunton YMCA  
 Sponsored by the Fire Department, L.P.F.A., and IAFF.

### National Trails Day

Date: June 1, 2002  
 Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
 Place: Percival's Island  
 Include hikes, demos, music and food.

### Communications Meeting

Date: June 6, 2002  
 Time: 8:30 a.m.  
 Place: Fire Administration  
 \*Note: The July meeting will be held on July 11th due to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday.

### River of Time Festival

Date: June 15, 2002  
 Time: 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
 Place: Percival's Island/Riverfront  
 (Firefighter's Competition begins at noon.)

### 2002 Recruit School Graduation

Date: June 19, 2002  
 Time: 7:00 p.m.  
 Place: City Council Chambers  
 Contact Jeannie O'Brien at Fire Admin.

### Fire & EMS Appreciation Night

Date: June 20, 2002  
 Time: 7:00 p.m.  
 Place: City Stadium  
 Free tickets will be distributed to stations beginning June 10<sup>th</sup>. Contact Jason Campbell for more information.

### Annual Retirees' Social

Date: June 26, 2002  
 Time: 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
 Place: Fire Administration  
 RSVP to Tammy Sage by June 21<sup>st</sup>.

### MDA Golf Tournament

Date: July 19, 2002  
 Place: London Downs Golf Course  
 Contact Jason Campbell at Station 6, or Jimmy Mitchell at Station 3.

## Class Act Awards

The following members received Class Act Awards in April.

- **Rob Turner, Warren Jamerson, Layne Terrell, Tom Sheppard, Allen Carwile, Jodi Sayre, and Spencer Spinner**  
 In recognition of their rapid response to an incident, and for exceptional service delivery while on the scene.
- **Anthony Smith, Ronnie Lewis, Rob Turner, Quincy Scott**  
 Representing the department in an exemplary manner as Honor Guards during a banquet at Frito Lay.
- **Carey McCleese and Johnny White**  
 In recognition for their expertise, dedication and proactive approach in repairing Truck 1, which resulted in significant financial savings.
- **Tom McCrickard**  
 Obtaining Adjunct Instructor Certification.
- **Station 2 - A, B, and C Shifts**  
 Renovations to assimilate the Logistics Office at Station 2.

## Recent Certifications and Development

### *Lee Day*

Lee was presented with a Certificate of Recognition from City Council on May 29<sup>th</sup> in recognition of his completion of the Executive Fire Officer Program.

### *Michael Thomas*

Plans Review Module of the Virginia Building Code Academy

### *Rick Guedj*

Basic Designated Officer Training Course

## Service Anniversaries

### June

	Years
Les Puckett	27
Brad Ferguson	26
Eddie Tyler	26
G. T. Sligh	25
Steve McLane	24
Derrick Carwile	24
Anthony Smith	22
Linda Eagle	22
Rick Ware	22
Ed Molette	22
Jonathan Wright	8
Thomas Goode	8
Mike Reeves	8
Stewart Barney	7
Jonathan Simms	6
Bob Mays	4
Diron Martin	3
Todd Styles	3
Buddy Martinette	2
David Bowles	1
Jennifer Carey	1
Roger Colinger	1
Todd Davis	1
Darryl DuBose	1
Scott Hudson	1
Matt O'Daniel	1
Carey Orange	1
Tony Peeler	1
Tim Pickle	1
Jodi Sayre	1

## Retirement

Congratulations to the Alan Spence who is retiring effective June 1, 2002. The department would like to thank Alan for 25 years of dedicated service!

